

CHALLENGE



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NO TO DAPL

STAND WITH STANDING ROCK

STANDING ROCK, December 4 — After months of protest, thousands of courageous, multiracial fighters forced a small concession from the Obama administration. The Army Corp of Engineers decided to deny the permit to complete the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL). But the oil billionaires behind DAPL and their politician puppets are already vowing to finish the pipeline.

The victory in this struggle is the fighting ethos, cooperation, and class-consciousness that have developed in the protesters' camp. As some leaders are telling the protesters to go home, many are staying. Join the Progressive Labor Party in the lifelong struggle for an egalitarian, communist world without racism and sexism.

Racism, Oil Pipeline Threaten Indigenous Workers' Water

DAPL was rerouted because it was too close to water sources near the mostly-white city of Bismarck, North Dakota. Because of racism, it was rerouted under the Missouri River near the Sioux Reservation, potentially ruining the water supply for thousands of indigenous workers. Businesses and the U.S. government have been devastating reservation lands for decades by dumping nuclear and chemical waste. Whether at Standing Rock or Flint, Michigan, the bosses kill workers with poisoned water or radioactive material. Pipeline leaks are routine. And so, thousands of protesters began setting up camps in to block DAPL.

Cultivating Communist Values

These courageous fighters faced fascist conditions and countless brutal attacks by the Morton County Sheriff's Department. Within the main camp, you see the DAPL floodlights, and police drones circling overhead 24 hours a day. On Thanksgiving weekend, protesters attempted to remove a barricade in the middle of the road. The militarized police attacked with tear gas, concussion grenades, rubber bullets, and water cannons in below freezing temperatures. Over 167 were injured and one young woman almost lost her arm from a concussion grenade.

One victory of this struggle was the communist values realized in the camp. A PLP comrade at Standing Rock said:

It felt like communism because the interactions



Demonstrators lock arms as they protest against the 1,200-mile access pipeline in Standing Rock on Nov 18.

aren't premised on what I can get from you but on how I help your wellbeing, and there was an understanding that this would be reciprocated. Everyone knew that feeding one person was also nourishing the collective, because they would be able to help the camp in other ways by putting that energy into the struggle. People willing to work for the wellbeing of the collective with no money incentive sustained the camp. Whether you were working in the kitchen, the medic tents, the art collective, or chopping wood, it was clear that you were working so that the struggle could continue moving forward. That was motivation enough.

At the end of a long day of work in freezing temperatures, you could expect to be invited to eat a communal meal with workers you'd just met that day. People were genuinely happy and willing to work hard for the betterment of the entire camp. In times of struggle, we come closer to communistic practices. Experiences like these help me see that the world PLP is fighting for is possible.

Losing Strategies

In the face of massive government violence, spirituality, non-violence and negotiating with politicians are losing strategies. They are prominent parts of the NoDAPL movement, led largely by tribal "Elders." These strategies will not stop the pipeline and will not end the violent capitalist system. The bosses and their government clearly do not care how many workers live or die.

Now the tribal chairman of the Standing Rock Sioux wants to end the protests: "I'm asking them to go," Dave Archambault III told Reuters, saying that the Obama administration 'did the right thing,' and that he hoped to 'educate the incoming administration' of President-elect Donald Trump" (NPR, 12/6).

The thousands of workers involved in this courageous fightback are told to go home. PLP fights for a mass Party where all workers are involved in making decisions and providing leadership. We

JOIN THE FIGHT FOR COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

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OUR FIGHT

★Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to destroy capitalism and the dictatorship of the capitalist class. We organize workers, soldiers and youth into a revolutionary movement for communism.

★ the dictatorship of the working class — communism — can provide a lasting solution to the disaster that is today's world for billions of people. This cannot be done through electoral politics, but requires a revolutionary movement and a mass Red Army led by PLP.

★Worldwide capitalism, in its relentless drive for profit, inevitably leads to war, fascism, poverty, disease, starvation and environmental destruction. The capitalist class, through its state power — governments, armies, police, schools and culture — maintains a dictatorship over the world's workers. The capitalist dictatorship supports, and is supported by, the anti-working-class ideologies of racism, sexism, nationalism, individualism and religion.

★While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead," capitalism is the real failure for billions worldwide. Capitalism returned to Russia and China because socialism retained many aspects of the profit system, like wages and privileges. Russia and China did not establish communism.

★Communism means working collectively to build a worker-run society. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. While capitalism needs unemployment, communism needs everyone to contribute and share in society's benefits and burdens.

★Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of "race." Capitalism uses racism to super-exploit Black, Latin, Asian and indigenous workers, and to divide the entire working class.

★Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women — sexism — and divisive gender roles created by the class society.

★Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.

★Communism means that the minds of millions of workers must become free from religion's false promises, unscientific thinking and poisonous ideology. Communism will triumph when the masses of workers can use the science of dialectical materialism to understand, analyze and change the world to meet their needs and aspirations.

★Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers. Join Us!

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WHO WRITES FOR CHALLENGE?

The fact that CHALLENGE/PLP articles are not signed grows from PLP's criticism of the cult of the individual in the former socialist Soviet Union and China. We do not want to encourage the possibility of building up a "following" around any particular individual.

While an article may be written by one person, the final version is based on collective discussion and criticism. Many times this collective discussion even precedes an individual's writing of an article.

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Editorial

Somalia, Djibouti, Yemen:
Flashpoints of
Imperialist War

The map illustrates the Horn of Africa region, highlighting the Red Sea to the north, the Gulf of Aden to the east, and the Indian Ocean to the south. Key countries shown include Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Somalia, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, South Sudan, Uganda, and Kenya. Major cities and locations are marked with dots, including Asmara, Mekele, Assab, Djibouti, Berbera, Hargeysa, Garoowe, Galcaio, Beledweyne, Mogadishu, Kismaayo, Baidoa, and Giohar (Jowhar). A dashed line indicates a provincial administrative boundary in Somalia. An inset map in the bottom left corner shows the location of the Horn of Africa within the continent of Africa.

As competition between imperialist superpowers China and the U.S. intensifies in the Horn of Africa, bomber-in-chief Barack Obama has laid the capitalist legal basis for a wider oil war in Somalia. The resulting devastation of the working class shows, more than ever, that we need communist revolution.

Oil Chokepoint: Bab el-Mandeb

Off the western flank of the Arabian Sea, the U.S. is hard-pressed to keep control over the oil shipment chokepoint at the strait of Bab el-Mandeb. The strait separates Djibouti and Yemen, between the Persian Gulf and the Suez Canal. Nearly four million barrels of oil pass through it every day (Business Insider, 11/3): "[H]e who controls Bab el-Mandeb has his fingers around the throats of both the EU and Asia's economies" (Counterpunch, 11/17/11).

This area is of longtime geopolitical importance for U.S. hegemony. In 1991, the U.S. Army War College published an unclassified study that called Bab Al-Mandeb "a confrontation arena between the superpowers, which tried to establish and then promote their military presence and influence there."

In the 1990s, the main U.S. rival in the area was Russia. Today it is China.

Somalia: From Bombs to Ground Operations

Somalia's working class is caught in the crossfire of the imperialists' fight to control Middle East oil. Barack Obama has expanded a mandate for war against

Al Qaeda to include Somalia, a precedent that president-elect Donald Trump will be free to escalate (NYT, 11/28). As Obama rains bombs on Somalia and murders masses of workers, the scope of the operation is expanding. According to official statistics, the number of U.S. Special Operations forces on the ground has climbed from 120 in 2007 to 300 (Reuters 7/14). The tempo of their rampage has increased to six raids a month (Telesurtv, 10/16). After conducting a covert operation until 2014, Obama has folded these raids into the perpetual war waged under the post-9/11 "Authorization for the Use of Force."

While the future of this conflict is unpredictable, U.S. bosses will need many more ground troops to hold off its imperialist rivals.

History of Imperialist Carnage

Imperialist designs on the Horn of Africa date back to the nineteenth century. Through occupations by British, French, Italian, Russian, and U.S. forces, the impact on workers has been the same: capitalist exploitation, instability, periodic famine. In 2006, after U.S.-backed warlords in Somalia were defeated by a group called the Islamic Courts Union (ICU), U.S. imperialism supported an Ethiopian invasion. As the ICU splintered, a faction called the Shabab emerged. Aligned with Al Qaeda, it became the main anti-U.S. force on the ground. These little terrorists seek to impose their own brand of capitalist exploitation on the local

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MTA Worker: “All these Rules Are Written in Blood!”

NEW YORK CITY, November 20—NYC Transit bosses are guilty of murder, and the transit workers’ union leader is guilty of helping them get away it.

On November 3, train conductor Louis Gray was struck and killed by a subway train in Brooklyn. Another worker, Jeffrey Fleming, was badly injured. They were setting up warning lights for a construction zone when a train came around a curve and pinned them. Louis was the fourth worker killed on the tracks in the last 10 years, but there have been countless injuries and near misses. A woman worker recently lost her arm when she tripped and touched the third rail. The blood of these workers and anyone hurt before or in the future, is on the bosses’ hands.

Before the body was cold, Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100 President John Samuelsen defended the racist MTA bosses and called this murder a “perfect-storm.” He said the operator and the track workers could not see each other because of the curve in the tracks. He said the union and MTA will create new rules for work zones with curved tracks, to which one worker responded, “All these rules are written in blood!” He said they wait until someone is killed before they address a problem that has existed for decades, like curved tracks.

Fighting Racism in all Workers’ Interests

The MTA bosses try to spend the bare mini-

mum on pay, training and safety and claim there’s no money for better benefits, but they spend millions on overtime, that they dish out like treats, instead of hiring more workers. The bosses’ media then focuses on a few high seniority workers who make big bucks and tries to paint us as rich, lazy and greedy in order to undermine any unity with the millions of our fellow workers and students we carry to work and school every day.

The union is no better. In the last negotiations, the union sold out the not-yet-hired member, expanding the pay progression to top pay from three to five years, while giving billions to the biggest banks year after year in interest on bonds used to pay for capital projects.

Transit workers are also directly affected by the rise of racist terror, on and off the job. The sister of Eric Garner, who was killed in a NYPD choke hold in 2014, is a transit worker in TWU Local 100. And a few months ago, an off duty copy brutally assaulted a train conductor, slamming her to the ground in front of horrified passengers because the train was delayed! Yet the union leadership did not make an issue out of the attack on the conductor and gave little more than lip service to the murder of Eric Garner. A large number of white transit workers supported Trump’s anti-Muslim, anti-immigrant racism, however, we must win them to see these racist attacks are attacks on them, too. Their futures are threatened because the futures of their black and Latin co-workers are threatened.

Workers’ Power Can Cripple Bosses

On November 15, thousands of transit workers rallied to demand wage increases in their next contract. The current contract expires on January 15, and with the Trump administration about to take power on January 20, the union leaders are feeling the pressure to get what they can before the promised cuts in federal spending. (SEPTA transit workers in Philadelphia recently went on strike and CTA transit workers in Chicago are also in contract talks.) A fare increase takes affect on January 1, which will hit Black, Latin and immigrant workers and youth the hardest. Not surprisingly, the union has taken no stand against the fare hike.

Globally, transit workers have the power to bring capitalism’s daily functioning to a screeching halt. Populations and production are more concentrated in congested urban areas. Therefore, transit workers are a vital link in the profit chain of the big corporations, finance capitalists like banks, and big retail. PLP is building a base in transit under the conditions of growing fascism and spreading war. The challenges of our contract, the Trump election, and racist police terror offer both danger and opportunity for building the revolutionary communist movement among transit workers. It won’t be easy. But we have confidence in our co-workers, and will learn from them how to be better communists.✪

Campus Cops’ Racism vs. Volleyball Students Spark Fightback

BROOKLYN, November 22—A multiracial group of twenty-five students, teachers, and parents armed with chant sheets and signs returned to Brooklyn Tech High School where school security agents had treated the students like criminals weeks earlier. Students and members and friends of Progressive Labor Party are leading the fight against racism (see *student letter*, page 6). We are giving School Safety, the arm of the NYPD that criminalizes mainly Black and Latin students, a taste of what an organized and committed group can do.

NYPD Criminalizes Students

On November 1, the volleyball team from Park Slope Collegiate High School (PSC), comprised of Black, Latin, and South Asian students, arrived at Brooklyn Tech for the game that would decide their entrance into the playoffs. Immediately upon arrival, they were treated like criminals by security. The team was forced to line up against the wall. The team’s managers and supporters were not allowed into the game and were told that only people on the roster were allowed in, even though for the last ten years of playing games at the school they were never asked for rosters. One student yelled, “What, are we in prison?”

The team’s captain protested a security guard’s abuse, saying, “This is racist!” to which the security guard yelled, “Keep your opinions to yourself.” The coach overheard another security guard saying, “That’s what happens when you go shopping.” This comment was in reference to the last match the team played where a member of the team was implicated in the theft of a phone, which was immediately returned. The implicated student was not in attendance as a consequence of these events. While these students were being treated like criminals, another school, made up of mostly white students, was allowed to walk right into the gym without being checked or made to line up.

This discriminatory treatment from School Safety is part of the racism that is necessary for capitalists. Capitalists need to maintain the lie that Black and Latin

kids and teens are criminals, in order to justify mass incarceration and police terror. This ideology also justifies unemployment, low wages, and homelessness, even though huge numbers of white workers suffer the same oppression. Anti-Black racism is why oppression and terrorization of Black workers is not taken as seriously as other struggles like DAPL (see front page).

Students Fight Back

That our students felt the indignity of racism while simply trying to play a game understandably angered and upset members of the volleyball team, student body, staff, parents, and alumni from Tech. Unwilling to take the racist treatment of the other team lying down, the team met with members of the student government to tell their story and asked for help in preparing a sit-in if the three agents who treated them horribly refused to apologize.

In preparation for the sit-in the captain of the team wrote a letter about the experience, which was sent to every teacher and parent in our school asking for support. Parents e-mailed and made phone calls to the principal of Brooklyn Tech and other higher ups in school safety demanding that these agents apologize to the team.

Knowing the team’s intention to have a sit-in, the principal and assistant principal of Tech greeted everyone and invited them to a meeting with the head of School Safety. The team received apologies from all three but the students were not having it. The team’s demand for an apology from the actual agents that treated them like criminals baffled the lieutenant who came to give lip service to the NYPD’s “Courtesy, Professionalism, and Respect” motto. She assumed her apology would be enough and tried to relate to the parents and students in the room by pointing out that she’s both Black and a parent. Our students and parents still weren’t having it. When the students wanted to go through with the sit-in, the Tech principal Randy J. Asher said that he wouldn’t stop the officers from arresting the team. He would rather have Black and Latin

students with their hands behind their backs than being treated with simple dignity and respect.

Our school community is used to fighting back whether that be against racist budget cuts, school segregation, or school scanning that makes our students feel more like criminals than students. This fightback and the multiracial, teacher-parent-student alliance that we have built over the years has forced the powers that be to respond much faster to this incident. We have been told to expect an apology from one of the three officers any day now. If we don’t, we’re prepared to keep fighting for it.

The leadership the students have given to this fightback has been amazing. They have stood up against racism and criminalization of Black and Latin students. We are up against a segregated and therefore inherently unequal school system. This system is no accident. Capitalism needs racism to survive, by dividing white from Black and Latin students and workers so that all can be oppressed and exploited for profit. Mayors, governors, and presidents claim that Black lives matter that police brutality needs to stop; meanwhile their troops on the ground (the police) brutalize and terrorize the working class. Capitalist leaders don’t actually care about Black and Latin workers, and that is what we saw. The higher-ups were hoping that their willingness to say the right thing would satisfy us, while their agents continue doing exactly as they’re supposed to—terrorize our students.

It is a victory every time we stand up to racism. All students and workers need to be ready to take action over and over again. Racism isn’t going away as long as we have capitalism. Fighting smaller battles steels us for bigger battles ahead. We are now even more committed to the struggle against racism and students are more confident in themselves and each other. This struggle is just one more nail in the bosses’ coffin. We are one step closer to building class consciousness and one step closer to defeating capitalism. Stay tuned for more fightback!✪

Horn of Africa

Continued from page 2

working class, different only in scale from the big terrorists of U.S. imperialism.

In 2010, U.S.-fomented instability and outright slaughter have combined with drought to bring famine to Somalia. At least 250,000 workers and children have starved to death. Tony Lake, UNICEF director and Clinton-era national security advisor, budgeted ten cents per person a day to feed our class brothers and sisters through this crisis, a death warrant signed by a trusted henchman of U.S. imperialism (telesur.net 9/11/16).

Djibouti: New Scramble for the Horn

A rising China looms as the main threat to U.S. imperialism, and to U.S. control of Bab el-Mandeb in particular. The Chinese imperialists are building their first overseas military outpost in Djibouti, a tiny nation between Somalia, Eritrea, and Ethiopia. The Chinese base is eight miles from the only acknowledged permanent U.S. military base in Africa (WSJ, 8/19).

Djibouti represents the latest example of China's pivot toward Africa. Beyond the \$200 billion spent on the continent in 2012, surpassing the U.S., China has pledged to invest \$1 trillion by 2025 (CNN Money, 12/5/15). Chinese President Xi Jinping openly refers to the Djibouti base as a key in defending Chinese interests in Middle East oil fields. Xi's top naval officers consider "steadily advancing overseas base construction" a top priority for Chinese capitalist (WSJ, 8/19). As the U.S. prepares for a wider ground war, direct clashes with China are a growing possibility.

Yemen: Obama's War

Another country caught in the superpowers' crossfire is Yemen, across Bab el-Mandeb from Djibouti and bordering Saudi Arabia to the south. Yemen is being torn apart in a proxy war between the Iran-backed Houthi rebels and the pro-Saudi/U.S. regime. A Saudi-led coalition has conducted indiscriminate air strikes across the country, killing thousands of workers. For the imperialists, the stakes are high; Saudi Arabia contains the world's largest reserves of



cheaply extracted oil. Obama and the finance capitalists he serves fear any threat to U.S. control over the world's foremost profit center.

Fight for Communism

In years past, millions of workers and students looked to communism in their struggles against imperialism, colonialism, and capitalist exploitation in the Horn of Africa and beyond. Nationalism led these fighters down a dead end. Progressive Labor Party is proud to carry forward the banner of the struggle against imperialism and rebuild proletarian internationalism. Let the imperialists start their wars—the workers can and will finish them with communist revolution! We have nothing to lose but our chains!✊

Syria: A Crisis of Imperialism

Half a million deaths, seven million refugees, and one country-turned-wasteland later, Russia and the U.S. are reportedly discussing a deal with the Aleppo rebels in Syria. These U.S.-backed, Al Qaeda-aligned forces have proven unable to defeat the Russia-backed government of President Bashar al-Assad. But Assad and his murderous regime were never what the cataclysmic war in Syria was primarily about. The real conflict is over oil and imperialist dominance.

U.S. and Russia at War

What does the U.S. want from Syria?

The U.S. wants to install a puppet regime in Damascus [Syria's capital]...[to] secure pipeline corridors in the East, oversee the transport of vital energy reserves from Qatar to the EU, and make sure those reserves continue to be denominated in U.S. Dollars that are recycled into U.S. Treasuries and U.S. financial assets. This is the basic recipe for maintaining U.S. dominance in the Middle East and for extending America's imperial grip on global power into the future (Counterpunch, 9/16).

The Russian oil bosses, of course, have a different agenda. The proxy war in Syria is not the first to be fought over pipelines. The TAPI pipeline triggered the 2001 U.S. invasion of Afghanistan—and the death and displacement of hundreds of thousands of workers. The proposed Qatar-Turkey pipeline, rejected by Assad in 2009, would have challenged Russia's domination. Shortly thereafter, CIA began funding opposition groups in Syria.

Russians, who sell 70 percent of their gas exports to Europe, viewed the Qatar/Turkey pipeline as an existential threat. In Putin's view, the Qatar pipeline is a NATO plot to...deprive Russia of its only foothold in the Middle East, strangle the Russian economy and end Russian leverage in the European energy market...

—Ecowatch, (2/25)

Imperialists Dig their Own Graves

The bosses' media has used anti-Muslim and Anti-Arab racism to paint Syria as another endless conflict between Muslim sects. To protect their profits, the imperialists use sectarian politics to commit racist and sexist horrors against the working class. As in Afghanistan, the U.S. strategy to fund Islamic nationalist groups in Syria is backfiring. One capitalist solution births the next capitalist crisis—in this case, ISIS.

The only solution is communism, a world without profit, war, and religious divisions. The working class is fighting back in Syria, Afghanistan, and throughout the Middle East. Progressive Labor Party is seeking to grow in these critical areas, and to turn the guns around for an egalitarian world.✊

STAND WITH STANDING ROCK

don't rely on a few leaders or "Elders" of the tribes.

Smash All Borders

Another inspiring part of the fight-back at Standing Rock is that it is multiracial. Workers from all over the world have come to fight. They understand that these attacks are similar to attacks all workers face under capitalism. Everyone should have access to clean drinking water. However, the struggle is limited by the identity politics that make the fight an "indigenous fight." This prevents us from uniting as a class. From the protesters at DAPL, to the refugees in Syria, to the iPhone factory workers in China, we are all part of the same struggle.

Fighting for the right of indigenous tribes to own land is a dead end. Drawing more borders cannot liberate the working class. Only the bosses have "self-determination" under capitalism. Regardless of historical treaties and agreements, the Standing Rock reservation has never had actual autonomy from U.S. state power. Making this an "indigenous fight" abandons the fight of Black, white, Asian, and Latin workers who are also terrorized and oppressed by capitalism. PLP fights for a world with no borders where all workers can live and work together.

Need Communism

The Army Corp of Engineers has put the current DAPL plans on hold, but the capitalist owners and their politician stooges have vowed to push



it through to completion. But it is impossible to build the pipeline without crossing a body of water. Whether it is a water source that supplies indigenous, Black, white, Asian, or Latin workers, we still need to fight against DAPL and all other capitalist threats to our class. We cannot be fooled into thinking that the capitalists have given up, and we cannot give up either. We must build for a communist revolution to get rid of the violent capitalist system once and for all. The world we want is possible if we fight for it. Join us in fighting for a communism!✊

The Cultural Revolution

Historic Uprising for Workers' Power



The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR) was an historic uprising of the working class led by the most advanced communist ideas at the time. It was the first time the working class attempted to take state power back from a former communist party that had returned to capitalism.

The leader of the Communist Party of China (CPC), Mao Tse Tung, initially encouraged the Cultural Revolution to get rid of a few people in the leadership of the Party, the left forces in the Cultural Revolution recognized that the official Communist Party was already in the hands of a capitalist ruling class at the time the GPCR began, that the vast majority (90 percent) of the leading cadres were part of that oppressor class, that the People's Liberation Army (or PLA, the military) was its tool to smash the real Left and maintain power, that the new "red" bourgeoisie had emerged during the 17 years from 1949-66 from the ranks of the revolutionaries themselves and, therefore, that the GPCR was not, as Mao said, a struggle to consolidate proletarian rule, but the first revolution in history to attempt to take power back from the fake "communists," known as revisionists. This analysis led the left workers and students leading the Cultural Revolution to carry out the following political campaigns.

1) They demanded the ouster of the chief representative of China's "red" capitalists, Chou En-Lai, along with the high-ranking economic and administrative ministers he was sheltering.

2) They demanded that the GPCR be carried into the Army Officer Corps, which they saw a part of the new ruling class. They engaged in arms seizures from the PLA, raiding depots and arms trains, on the principle that a revolution to overthrow the bourgeoisie had to be an armed struggle of the masses.

3) They opposed China's foreign policies of alliance with capitalist countries. To carry this through they seized foreign ships in the harbors, burned the British consulate in August of 1967, launched a liberation struggle in Hong Kong, seized Soviet arms going to Vietnam over China's railroad lines and opposed China's nuclear development program.

4) They began to discuss and implement the formation of a new Communist party, given their assumption that the CPC had become the party of the bourgeois apparatus that was restoring capitalism under the ideological cover of a fake brand of communism.

The left forces presented a view of what was going

on in the GPCR which was contradictory to the official views of the CPC under Mao, who claimed "95% of the cadres are good" vs. the left-wing forces in the GPCR who said "90% of the political cadres must step aside."

Fake "Communists" Spread Capitalist Lies

To amplify how completely the Chinese bosses have now moved to capitalism, they now tell the same lies about the Cultural Revolution as the U.S. bosses. The distorted historical narrative told by the capitalists who currently rule China, and retold and amplified by capitalists around the world, is that the Cultural Revolution was "10 lost years" in which the Chinese economy was on the brink of collapse.

However, when one of the participants in a San Francisco conference celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Cultural Revolution went to China with a group of Western economists in the midst of the Cultural Revolution in 1972, the iconic liberal mainstream economist John Kenneth Galbraith was in the delegation and re-viewed economic data made available by the Chinese leadership and calculated that the GDP was growing at about 9% per year, similar to the rate touted as the "Chinese miracle" after the restoration of capitalism after the late 1970s.

The participation of millions of workers and farmers in political meetings did not cause production to stop, or even to slow down. The criticism of factory or farm managers to a previously unheard of degree, and active involvement in "non-productive" activities that amounted to having a say in the running of society, in fact energized the masses of workers and farmers.

The Communists accomplished feats that would be called miracles under capitalism, starting with spreading literacy across a country of a billion people, introducing health care and ending starvation in what had been one of the poorest countries in the world prior to the communist revolution. Their efforts in the GPCR showed the importance of continuing the struggle for workers power even after a revolution. But to ultimately succeed in building a communist society we have to

Workers Commemorate the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution

BAY AREA, UNITED STATES—

This year, 2016, is the 50th anniversary of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR) in China. The 10-year period from 1966 to 1976 is viewed by communists as the most left period in post-revolutionary China, the farthest any society yet progressed toward trying to put ordinary industrial and agricultural workers in charge of running things. It is also the period of China's history most attacked and slandered by the capitalists who now rule China.

These political traitors who still call themselves the "Communist" Party of China have grown incredibly wealthy at the expense of the working class. Most academics in Europe and North America are eager to amplify and spread the distortions and lies about the GPCR published by the capitalist scholars and politicians who dominate China today.

There is another side to the story. Gatherings in China celebrating the positive accomplishments of the GPCR, mostly low profile, have taken place in a number of cities. There have also been pro-communist gatherings in other countries, including the U.S. One in particular was held in the Bay Area of northern California in October.

The evening centered on reproductions of two giant character posters (dazibao), one written by communists from the U.S. who were living and working in China. One of the poster writers, in her 80s and wheelchair bound, was present at the conference. She was an inspiration to the younger generations present. In 1966, she wrote posters criticizing the Chinese au-

thorities for giving them and other foreign "experts" special treatment, like better living conditions and no expectation for manual labor. They declared that they, too, aspired to be real revolutionaries and the special treatment undermined their political will and created a separation from the Chinese masses. The special treatment undermined internationalism.

At the event, many new publications were discussed about the Cultural Revolution. The Cultural Revolution at the Margins by Yiching Wu (Harvard University Press, 2014) starts from the perspective that the restoration of capitalism began with Mao Zedong's betrayal of the masses of left workers and students mobilized in the first months of the GPCR. He writes, "Quashing the restless rebels as early as late 1967, Maoist politics ... exhausted its once explosive energy. ... [and] eventually led to the historic changes in the social, economic and political life in post-Mao China."

To find out more about the Cultural Revolution you can see three articles from PL Magazine, available on PLP.org:

The GPCR & The Reversal Of Workers' Power In China (1971)

Whither China? (1972)

Why Were Communist Revolutions Reversed In China And The USSR?

Additionally:

The titles and brief summaries of the papers from the San Francisco Conference are now posted at www.wholeworldjustice.org

look at the errors of the CPC as well. While the left forces in the GPCR did so many great things they ultimately were defeated and capitalism was firmly established in China. It is important for us to try to understand why the GPCR failed.

One Step Forward, Two Steps Back

Communist movements will inevitably make many mistakes big and small. The Progressive Labor Party previously believed in fighting for socialism as an intermediary step towards communism. Now, largely from looking at what happened in the former Soviet Union and China, we are fighting for the building of a communist society directly. It is not the only correction we have made or will have to make going forward. For the working class to take and hold power it is essential that the revolutionary communist movement be able to correct ideological errors and bad practice. Criticism and self-criticism of our ideas and activity is the only way we can deal with problems and mistakes that arise. The leadership of the Party especially, has to honestly and soberly evaluate their own ideas and practice and be open to criticism from others.

Perhaps the main weakness that led to the defeat of the GPCR was the belief in the cult of the individual surrounding Mao Tse Tung. A big weakness of the old communist movement was that it built up individual leaders as people who could do no wrong. While the Left forces in China recognized that China had moved back to capitalism, they held on to the wrong idea that Mao,

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LETTERS

We encourage all CHALLENGE readers to send in letters and articles about their experiences fighting the bosses worldwide.

8th Grader: The Time I Protested Racism

I'm an eighth grade student in a Brooklyn school that is predominantly Black and Latin. Recently, the high school volleyball team and supporters traveled to Brooklyn Technical High School for a game to determine if we would make it to playoffs. When we arrived, security guards at the school did not want to let anyone but the players into the building, including the team managers. This was the first time ever that entry was restricted at one of our games. Even though we disputed this with the security guards, they rudely kicked many of us out. I was let in because my father works at the school. When the team entered, they were told to walk in a straight line until they reached the gym. The other school we played, predominantly white, was let in with no problem.

The team was really upset about this racist treatment, which also affected their playing during the game. So the team decided to fight back! We wrote a letter demanding an in-person apology from the guards themselves and a rematch scrimmage.

This is definitely not the first time high school students have had to deal with racist acts in schools. This happens almost every day. Students at mainly Black and Latin schools are forced to walk through metal detectors and remove all metal items just to enter.

It's important to not keep quiet when racist acts happen. Many kids feel like they won't be heard, but it's not true. We got parents, teachers and some students from Brooklyn Tech and our school to attend a school meeting where we demanded an apology. We helped to get all of these people to fight racism also. It's important to organize against racism and not be afraid. Your voice will be heard.

★★★★★
100s H.S. Students Walk Out

Hundred of high school students led a walk-out, and marched with teachers down a busy street, fists raised in the air, to the sounds of chanting and honking horns. They were marching for a world without racism and inequality. They were marching for their futures.

Since the election there has been a sharp rise in racist attacks. But young people are not just drifting quietly into this dark night. Dozens grabbed our "no racism" pins for themselves and their friends and took to the streets.

This developed from a week of conversations in class and student-led forums about how to respond to the election results. Some students cried, others were filled with fear. By the end of the discussions students agreed that they were powerful together and could take a stand.

The bosses draw people into their system through elections. They try to convince the working class that they have a voice when they choose between Trump and Clinton. One student pointed out that "if Trump is the devil, then Clinton is Lucifer"; two heads of the same coin. Another noted that while Trump talks about deporting people, Obama has actually done it.

While many students have seen the inherent failures in capitalism, there is still more work to be done to present a solution. As a new teacher at the school, this has provided great opportunities to continue to build a base among teachers and students. Both groups are open to communist ideas. One thing is clear; young people are not just me-focused, selfie takers as the media would have us believe. They are ready to fight for our class! With the right leadership, we will win!

★★★★★
Opposing NPI Gutter Racists

The white supremacist National Policy Institute got a lot of attention on November 19th when about 200 protesters disrupted their annual banquet Friday night at a local restaurant and their Saturday meeting at the Ronald Reagan Building in Washington, D.C. I'm here to tell you that Progressive Labor Party (PLP) communists and others have disrupted their meetings for the past four years because we knew have known how rotten they are long before Clinton lost her bid to be the next oppressor-in-chief. Of course, it is great that others joined us this year to protest. There were many in the crowd with reform struggle posters – and I applaud them for joining us. I especially was warmed by the children carrying, "Use Kind Words" posters.

But we must keep the real struggle in the forefront. Racism will not be ended without the multiracial unity

of working class in the destruction of capitalism. Many in the crowd agreed with us. There were many who spoke to the crowd via bullhorn including a PLP comrade. After his impromptu speech, many young people approached him to express their agreement and understanding. Trump's election made clear that the revisionist lines are not going to work. They want to know more. My own conversations away from the bullhorn and in the crowds gave reason to hope that a communist revolution is possible. The working class knows that the Democrats and Republicans cannot be trusted. Comrades, please keep up the struggle.

★★★★★
Clinton Wanted Trump—
She Got Trumped!

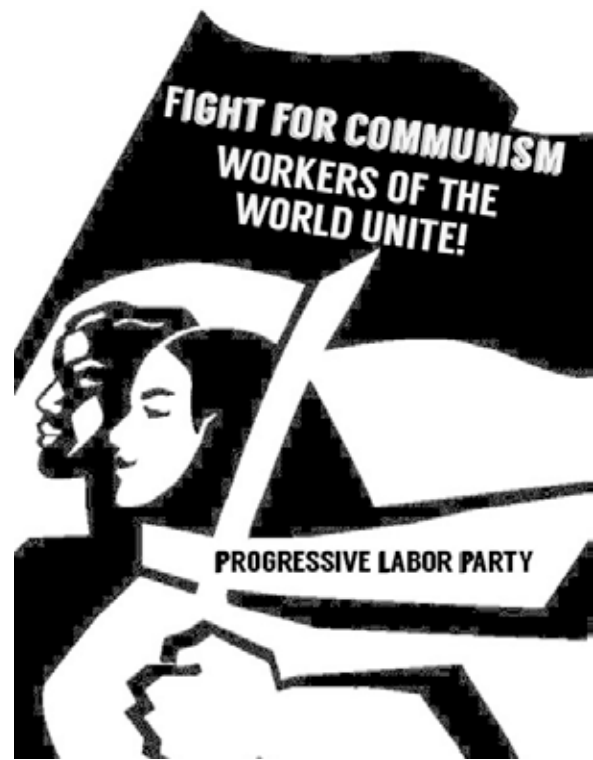
We've been reading Progressive Labor Party (PLP) literature since 1965. This was by far the most inspiring Challenge (11/23/16) dealing with the huge political shift to the right in the U. S., which is on workers' minds. Challenge brought in the history of the Bolshevik Revolution, giving a perspective on the opportunity that a fascist U. S. President presents to the Party and the working class. There was a great article on the Standing Rock protests, connecting the current movement with the history of indigenous people fighting imperialism. It is critically important that 350 tribes united after centuries of boss-inspired divisions. This issue also included anti-sexist struggles, such as the hotel housekeepers' fight in Los Angeles. We are excited to continue the fight alongside the Progressive Labor Party.

Yes, the capitalists are in disarray. But, the Challenge editorial says that the bosses "did its best to swing the presidential race to Hillary Clinton." We are regular readers of the New York Times (NYT), and were wondering why the NYT, which had come out in favor of Clinton, had daily reports on Trump, sometimes five or more, throughout the campaign. During the primaries, Trump received 23 times more coverage than Bernie Sanders. We kept asking ourselves, why do the bosses talk about Trump so much? The answer is that Hillary asked them to. In a leaked letter, the Clinton campaign told the Democratic National Committee (DNC) to back the extreme right-wing candidates to create a perfectly beatable candidate. Using Wikileaks Richard Moser found the following excerpts from a Clinton campaign email to the DNC dated April 7, 2015. This outlines the Clinton strategy well before Trump officially declared his candidacy (Counterpunch.com, 10/11).

"Force all Republican candidates to lock themselves into extreme conservative positions that will hurt them in a general election ... many of the lesser known [candidates] can serve as a cudgel to move the more established candidates further to the right ... we don't want to marginalize the candidates, but make them more 'Pied Piper' candidates who actually represent the mainstream Republican Party. Pied Piper candidates include ... Donald Trump."

According to Counterpunch this was "a premeditated, purposeful and extremely reckless design to bring Trump into the national spotlight. So the bosses actually pushed Trump in order to give Hillary an easier win. They didn't really want Trump to win and the Trump election back-fired on them.

On the other hand, the move to the right in the U. S.



and worldwide was well under way before the election of Trump and reflects the decline of the US-European empire. The rulers had already instituted many aspects of fascism under Obama: street executions of black workers, mass deportations of 2.5 million workers, attacks on protests of indigenous water protectors in South Fork, embedded reporters to suppress war news, mass incarceration of Black and Latin workers, failure of writ of habeas corpus in Guantanamo, and so on. Now, Trump is appointing many billionaires from Wall Street or sympathetic to it.

★★★★★
Recalling Visit to Cuba

Fidel Castro's recent death leads me to recall some impressions I had of him and of Cuban socialism when I attended a conference titled Marxism in the 21st Century in Havana back in 2003.

(1) He referred to the growing dollar economy, which was greatly favored by his pro-Chinese model finance minister, as "poison."

(2) He unpacked before the audience a huge box of paperback translations

of U.S. classics such as Mark Twain's Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, and glorified Cuba's educational system.

(3) He defended the execution of some U.S. spies to a bunch

of U.S.-based liberal academics who were bothered by any use of violence by

the Cuban state. He stated that if U.S. imperialism were not making such concerted attempts to destroy Cuban socialism, such measures would not be needed. In principle, they were a violation of what "socialist values" should be.

I also recall, though, that whenever Fidel got up to "inject a point," people in the audience—especially fellow Cubans—moaned slightly, since his shortest interventions were at least 45 minutes long!

As PLP has correctly analyzed, there were some key shortcomings in Cuba from the time of the 1959 revolution. Its close ties with the USSR kept Cuba without a diversified economy and dependent on the USSR and its allies. But since the late 1960s, I have to say that I have been continually moved by so much of what was accomplished in this small nation, only 90 miles from the USA. Illiteracy was rapidly wiped out. Hardly any people died in hurricanes after 1959, unlike elsewhere in the Caribbean and Central America, where hundreds of people often die in poor, capitalist-ruled islands.

Moreover, the Cubans aided anti-imperialist movements around the world by providing medical care and, as in Angola, armed support. And while they did not eradicate the racial disparities inherited from colonialism, they did much better than the capitalist U.S.! Anti-racism was a principled position of the revolution.

But the dollar economy has gained increasing influence over the years, and

has reigned supreme since Raul Castro, Fidel's brother, took over nearly a decade ago. And even when I was in Havana in 2003, I was disturbed to witness the widespread return of prostitution. Just about every male in our delegation was accosted on the street several times.

Getting rid of the brothels that was Cuba under Batista was one of the great achievements of the revolution. So the struggle continues.

★★★★★
Bankrupt Language
of Liberalism

Liberals are crying a lot these days, post-election. "How could the Democratic Party have gotten so caught up in 'identity politics?'" they wail. "How could we have paid all that attention to 'race' and 'gender' and forgotten about class and economics?"

The election of arch-racist and sexist Trump is giving many opportunities for our Party to grow as the class struggle heats up. In discussions with our friends, we need to understand how the rulers' liberal, but hypocritical mass media uses language to obscure political reality.

Some examples:
"Economics" is used to signify hardship, or poverty, but what's never talked about is exploitation (theft by the bosses of the product of workers' labor), the bed-

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No Justice for Walter Scott through the KKKourts

NEW YORK CITY, December 7—The hung jury in the trial of kkkop Michael Slager who murdered Walter Scott once again exposes the courts’ role in upholding a racist system. We will continue to fight for justice for Walter, and the countless targets of racist police murders.

The court system is part of the capitalist state, an arm of the ruling class to enforce racist laws and a racist prison system. While there have been a few instances where the courts were forced to convict, their main job is to work with the police to enforce racism and anti-working class laws designed to keep the capitalists in power.

When you go to court, the judges, the prosecutors the police and even the defense attorneys all work together on a daily basis. Cop Slager was part of that system, a system that needs its police to feel free to terrorize workers, especially Black workers.

Walter was a 50-year-old fork-lift operator who had served two

years in the U.S. Coast Guard. He was struck with five bullets, three of them in the back.

In this particular case, the bosses are trying to put the blame for the acquittal on the jury. Certainly the jury was full of racism. It’s a society that was founded on slavery and the forced segregation of Black and white workers. It’s a society that has filled the prisons with Black men and women, and filled our minds with racist lies.

Slager chose a jury trial because his lawyers played the overwhelming odds that the racism would prevail. His lawyers knew the prosecutor would not take the path of exposing this murder as an inevitable outcome of a racist system.

We will fight for justice for Walter Scott in the streets, in the courts, in the schools, in our work places and every other battlefield. Ultimately, justice will be in the form of freeing ourselves to smash capitalism once and for all.✊

The Cultural Revolution

Continued from page 5

the leader of the country, was not a supporter of the backward changes. He was, and ultimately Mao used his influence and his control of the Army to put down the revolution.

Struggle, Fail, Struggle... WIN

The lessons of the GPCR are one of the driving forces in history that has given PLP the confidence that the working class will fight for a communist future. It has also helped us understand the need to continually struggle against capitalist ideology of individualism in ourselves and in the communist movement. The effort of the working class in the GPCR has been an invaluable contribution to the fight for communism.

Other lessons learned from the GPCR:

- Confidence in the working class and the need for a mass communist party: We are building a party that is open to everyone who wants to fight for a communist future for the working class. People can make contributions in many different ways and the more people who participate in building the Party and ultimately running society the better off we will be.
- Breakdown of the separation between “experts” and “followers.” In

CHALLENGE, we try to explain what is going on in the world as well as have articles on fighting back in the class struggle. We believe that we can only understand the world by trying to change it and knowledge and understanding comes out of putting communist ideas into practice. We call this “better red than expert!”

- The struggle for communism will continue for generations. The working class taking state power is only the beginning of the fight to build a communist society.

This 50th anniversary of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution is an opportunity to struggle with our coworkers and friends to renew our efforts to smash this racist, sexist, imperialist system of capitalism once and for all. Fighting back also means understanding what previous generations in this fight have done – both right and wrong. As the world lurches toward fascism and inter-imperialist war, we have our work cut out for us. We, heirs to the struggle for a communist world, truly honor the heroic masses who fought in the GPCR by organizing on our jobs and in our mass organizations for armed communist revolution. Dare to struggle, dare to win!✊

LETTERS CONTINUED

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rock reason for the “economic” problems facing the working-class.

“Class” is taken to signify only level of income and education. The term “worker” is reserved for white workers alone, while the capitalist bosses’ “ruling-class” is never mentioned at all. Meanwhile, Black, Latin, immigrant people, and women are not thought of as workers, but as “special interest” groups based on “identity.”

While there may be workers, there is no “working-class”; only a (white) “middle-class” in decline because of “globalization.” But, the members of this failing “middle-class”, even if they are laid off, beset by drug addiction, and living on the margin-still have “white privilege.”

Globalization, meanwhile, is just expanded trade, not greedy corporations seeking lower wages and bigger markets. Nothing is said about stagnating industrial domestic economies. Never mentioned are the rivalries between imperialist rulingclasses around the world, whose conflicts will eventually lead to “globalized” war.

“Race” substitutes for “racism” and “gender” substitutes for “sexism.” These terms convert ruling-class ideologies and material practices into identities. The vicious history of colonialism, slavery, and imperialism (where the concept of “race” originated) is papered over by the treatment of “race” as a trans-historical category, one that has supposedly existed as long as humanity. Ditto for “gender”: the long history of women’s provision of unpaid labor, the source of mountains of accumulated wealth in the banks of the bosses, is reduced to a demographic category. Plus, only dark-skinned people have “race” and only women or LGBTQ people have “gender.” How can that be?

The current liberal questioning of “identity politics” is all about the failures of the Democratic Party in the recent election. But this “questioning” only aims toward rebuilding nationalism among all classes. Whereas we need to explain how capitalism exploits the working-class and legitimates itself through false and ideologically-loaded language.

While liberals use “class” to mean just one more group-based “experience” defined by income level, communists define class as a social relation of production, i.e., the type of work people do. Either they are bosses who profit or workers who labor just to (try to) pay their bills.

We need to get past the smoke and mirrors in the language of the mass media. Only then can we be clear about the struggle between the working-class and the capitalist, and about the need for working-class revolution to destroy this exploitative system and substitute for it an egalitarian communist system.

★★★★★

CASTRO

Continued from page 5

sector for all but the lowest-paid.

Slowly but surely, capitalist policies expanded the private profit sector. First, licenses were sold to individuals to open small businesses for auto repair, carpentry, and plumbing. By 1981, private contracting cooperatives were building 38 percent of new housing units. Private farmers diverted produce from the state, which paid low fixed prices, and sold it instead on the open market for their private benefit. To increase production and profits, the sugar industry was mechanized, reducing the number of cane cutters from 350,000 in the 1960s to 72,000 in 1985. A new elite was born, defined by their wealth in money.

Apartheid Tourism and Racist Inequalities

In recent years, these capitalist practices have grown even stronger. After a boost from Barack Obama and the reopening of U.S. diplomatic relations, the Cuban tourist industry now earns as much hard currency as the sugar industry. Mexican and Spanish bosses can own up to 51 percent of hotels and export 100 percent of their profits, earned on the sweat of powerless hotel workers. Prostitution, a hallmark of the bad old Batista/Mafia days, is booming once again.

Local workers are barred from these hotels as guests; they call it “apartheid tourism.” Like capitalism everywhere, capitalism in Cuba needs racism to divide and super-exploit workers. [Spanish ships brought 900,000 Africans to Cuba as slaves, about twice the number forced brought to what is now the U.S. (<http://bit.ly/2gE6fH5>.) While Fidel’s early reforms undeniably helped poor Black workers, he overstated the case in 1961, when he claimed that racist discrimination in Cuba was a thing of the past. In 2005, a year before the end of Fidel’s rule as president, Black workers were unemployed at double the rate of white workers. While darker-skinned Cubans made up somewhere between one-third and two-thirds of the population, they accounted for 85 percent of the nation’s inmate population (Al Jazeera, 8/13/15). Under Fidel’s

brother and successor, Raul Castro, as Cuba has accelerated its market capitalist reforms, racist inequalities have kept pace. From Al Jazeera:

“The problem,” said Alejandro de la Fuente, director of the Institute of Afro-Latin Studies at Harvard University, “is that the new policies produce losers, because their chief concern is not social justice, but economic growth and survival. None of these policies is racially defined, but they produce new forms of social inequalities, and those inequalities tend to be racialized quickly because of unequal access.”

Under the relentless pressure of the profit system, Fidel’s most admired reforms have suffered. “[A]doption of the Soviet model of economic development contributed to two internal factors that have undermined health care: low productivity of labor and the growth of bureaucracy. Social expenditures declined from 70% of the GNP in 1970 to 36% in 1995,” after the end of Soviet bloc aid (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/7593738>). As of 2012, according to Al Jazeera, Cuba’s infant mortality rate remained lower than the rate in the U.S. Life expectancy was among the world’s highest. But non-emergency operations were routinely delayed, and there was a chronic shortage of medicines (6/18/12).

The Only Solution is a Communist Revolution!

Yes, the liberal reformers of Fidel’s Cuba improved most workers’ standard of living, at least for a time. They constructed a defense against hurricanes unequalled in the hemisphere. But despite these achievements, the return of capitalism to Cuba is restoring all the evils that are part and parcel of the profit system. In field and factory, Cuban workers need an egalitarian society that will abolish the wage system and its artificial division between intellectual and manual labor. Like Vladimir Putin’s Russia and the sweatshop economy in today’s China, Castro-style “socialism” has confirmed the fallacy of the two-stage theory of communism. When a revolution leaves capitalist components in place, it inevitably decays back to full-blown capitalism.

The working class of Cuba needs what Fidel Castro often promised but never pursued: a communist revolution.✊

FIDEL CASTRO: NO REVOLUTIONARY

The legacy of Fidel Castro contains two critical lessons for the international working class. The first is that workers will never advance toward communism under a leadership that holds on to capitalist inequalities. The second: Reform victories under the profit system are neither adequate nor lasting. Only a dictatorship of the proletariat can smash racism, sexism, and capitalist exploitation. Only a communist society, run by and for workers, can serve the needs of our class.

In the wake of Castro's death on November 25, the bosses' media celebrated "the end of communism" in Cuba. The left-liberal media acclaimed "the Cuban experiment" was to move the working class toward "socialist" or even "communist" liberation. Both camps are wrong. Essentially, the Fidelistas were liberal reformers. They exerted state control over the means of production while preserving the rotten core of the profit system, from wages and social inequality to racist unemployment and incarceration. In short, they were state capitalists. They traded domination by U.S. imperialism for the heavy hand of the imperialist Soviet Union under the rotten, revisionist (fake-left) Nikita Khrushchev. Fidel actively encouraged a cult of personality, elevating his own erratic judgment over the collective wisdom of the working class. Eventually, Cuba's market-oriented tilt under Castro exposed his self-proclaimed Marxist-Leninism for what it always was—a deception.

Where Castro Went Wrong

Initially, Fidel was daring and resourceful. In 1959, his small rebel group won state power through armed struggle. It smashed the oppressive ruling clique of President Fulgencio Batista—a big defeat for U.S. imperialism, which had enjoyed free rein in exploiting Cuba since the Spanish-American War of 1898. Castro won support from Cuban workers with significant reforms: a price freeze, a tax cut, reduced rents, and, most notably, universal literacy and health care. He abolished official segregation and opened labor unions to Black members. He expelled the Mafia gangsters who controlled Havana and ran its gambling, drug, and commercial sex rackets. He made mortal enemies of the U.S. bosses by expropriating \$1 billion worth of U.S. corporate holdings, including oil refineries, banks, and sugar mills.

In response, the U.S. rulers slapped an economic embargo on the island nation. Beginning under the Dwight Eisenhower administration and escalating under President John F. Kennedy, the U.S. began organizing an invasion to overthrow Castro. Meanwhile, several hundred thousand white middle-class Cubans—virtually the entire urban professional class and commercial bourgeoisie—fled to Miami, taking much of the country's financial reserves with them.

Facing desperate shortages of basic commodities, Castro could have pursued a communist path of self-sufficient economic development. He could have liberated Cuba from the world market and freed workers from the grip of imperialism. Had he chosen that path, it would have lowered material living conditions for many in the short term—though not for the most oppressed workers, who might have become the base for a true revolution.

But Castro was limited by his nationalist ideology. He could not envision a fundamental reorganization of social and production relations. Instead, he turned to a new trading partner—Moscow. By 1960, Khrush-



Fidel Castro, taken in 2003

chev had openly renounced the revolutionary goal of a working-class dictatorship over society. The Soviet Union's state capitalist regime wanted to supplant U.S. imperialism in the world market and saw its opening in Cuba, on the doorstep of the U.S. bosses. The Soviet Union agreed to provide Cuba with crude oil, industrial goods, and a \$100 million loan in return for sugar, fruit, fiber, and hides (Peter Bourne, *Fidel: A Biography of Fidel Castro*, 1986). Cuba's die was cast. For the next three decades, until the Soviets' economy collapsed, Cuba was tied to an imperialist superpower that systematically betrayed the great Russian Revolution.

Socialist Speeches, Capitalist Deeds

In April 1961, Castro's forces routed the U.S. CIA-directed invasion at the Bay of Pigs, drawing Cuba even more tightly within the Soviet orbit.

Fidel declared, "What the imperialists cannot forgive us, is that we have made a socialist revolution under their noses" (Bourne, 1986). In fact, Castro's socialism had a solid capitalist foundation. Workers were exploited to increase profits and accumulate capital. Guided by Soviet advisors, Fidel's regime imposed rigid discipline in production, with higher pay for more efficient workers. As with every wage system, these differentials divided the working class.

By 1962, Cuba's economy had reached full capacity. More coal and electric plants, transmission lines, and roads were needed. Short of hard currency, Castro's government subordinated the country to the world market by expanding exports of its one marketable commodity. Cuba became the Soviets' "sugar colony." To accumulate more capital, the government imposed "communist consciousness" by cutting wages in the state

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